

REMARKS

Claims 31-42 and 51-54 are pending. Claims 1-30 and 43-50 are currently canceled. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

SUBSTANCE OF THE INTERVIEW

Applicants thank Examiner Michael B. Nelson for the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative, Harold C. Knecht III, during a telephonic interview on 05 January 2011. During the interview, the finality of the previous office action was discussed and found to be incorrect. A non-final office action was sent out on January 19, 2011 to correct the finality issue and restart the reply period.

§ 103 Rejections

Claims 31-35, 37-42, and 51-54 were rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Tait et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0219577) in view of Soodak et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,945,203). Claim 36 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Tait et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0219577) in view of Soodak et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,945,203) as applied to claim 33 above, and further in view of Gourio (U.S. Patent No. 6,334,382). It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action fails to present a prima facie case that claims 31-42, and 51-54 are obvious over the cited art.

As an initial matter, this rejection is based on a reference that cannot be used in rejecting the subject claims. In particular, please note that the present application has a priority filing date of July 16, 2003. The cited reference Tait et al., however, did not publish until November 27, 2003. In addition, Tait et al. shares a common assignee with the subject application (i.e., 3M Innovative Properties Company).

Without the teachings of Tait et al., the Office Action fails to establish the requisite requirements of a prima facie case of obviousness, for example, because Liu et al. and Soodak et al. do not provide any disclosure, teaching or suggestion that would motivate the person of

ordinary skill in the art of multilayer optical films to use a laser in such a way as to produce a multilayer optical film having a fused peripheral edge, as recited in the present claims. In particular, for example, while the first full paragraph on page 25 of Liu et al. teaches to avoid delamination along the edges of their multilayer optical film, this teaching is related to an autoclaving lamination process. In fact, Liu et al. expressly disclose how to avoid such delamination by controlling the rate at which the multilayer optical film is cooled after autoclaving. There is no indication in Liu et al. that this solution to delamination has anything to do with fusing the peripheral edge of their multilayer optical film. Thus, contrary to the position taken in the Office Action, this teaching would not provide the person of ordinary skill with any motivation to use a laser to prevent delamination or any expectation that using a laser to cut their multilayer optical film would inhibit delamination.

In addition, the teachings of Soodak et al. are not even related to multilayer optical films. Instead, the invention of Soodak et al. relates to the use of a laser to weld two plastic films together in order to manufacture plastic bags. Thus, Soodak et al. fails to provide any teaching that would provide the requisite motivation.

Claims 31-35, 37-42, and 51-54 were also rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Neavin et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0013668) in view of Soodak et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,945,203). Claim 36 is rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Liu et al. (WO 01/096104) in view of Neavin et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0013668) in view of Soodak et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,945,203) as applied to claim 33 above, and further in view of Gourio (U.S. Patent No. 6,334,382). It is respectfully submitted that the Office Action also fails to present a prima facie case of obviousness against claims 31-42, and 51-54 based on this combination of references.

In particular, these cited references do not provide any disclosure, teaching or suggestion that would motivate the person of ordinary skill in the art of multilayer optical films to use a laser in such a way as to produce a multilayer optical film having a fused peripheral edge, as recited in the present claims. For example, as noted above, while the first full paragraph on page 25 of Liu et al. teaches to avoid delamination along the edges of their multilayer optical film, this

teaching is related to an autoclaving lamination process. In fact, Liu et al. expressly disclose how to avoid such delamination by controlling the rate at which the multilayer optical film is cooled after autoclaving. There is no indication in Liu et al. that this solution to delamination has anything to do with fusing the peripheral edge of their multilayer optical film. Thus, contrary to the position taken in the Office Action, this teaching would not provide the person of ordinary skill with any motivation to use a laser to prevent delamination or any expectation that using a laser to cut their multilayer optical film would inhibit delamination.

A careful review of Neavin et al. also reveals no disclosure, teaching or suggestion that would provide such motivation. In paragraph [184], Neavin et al. teach it is desirable to prevent delamination of their multilayer optical film during a conversion process (e.g., when the film is cut into glitter). However, the solution they disclose for preventing such delamination is to insure that the multilayer optical film exhibits sufficient inter-layer adhesion. To obtain such inter-layer adhesion, Neavin et al. teach to adjust the residence times during the various process stages in manufacturing the film itself (see paragraph [0103]). Thus, the Neavin et al. solution to film delamination is directed to the inter-layer adhesion of the entire film. In contrast, the present invention is directed to fusing a peripheral edge of a multilayer optical film, as recited in the present claims.

In addition, as noted above, the teachings of Soodak et al. are not even related to multilayer optical films. Instead, the invention of Soodak et al. relates to the use of a laser to weld two plastic films together in order to manufacture plastic bags. Soodak et al. do not care about the affect their laser process may have on the optical properties of their plastic films. In contrast, the present invention is directed to fusing together a peripheral edge of an optical film having at least 100 optical layers. Thus, Soodak et al. also fails to provide any teaching that would provide the requisite motivation.

Therefore, because none of the cited prior art references provide any disclosure, teaching or suggestion that would motivate the person of ordinary skill in the art to make the present claimed invention, the Office Action has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness. Accordingly, the above rejections of claims 31-42, and 51-54 under 35 USC § 103(a), at least for the above reasons, has been overcome and should be withdrawn.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.
Examination and reconsideration of the application is requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

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